

REPORT
OF THE
SPECIAL COMMITTEE

OF THE
EIGHTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE
STATE OF IOWA,

APPOINTED TO REPORT ON THE
REMOVAL OF THE GIRLS' DEPARTMENT OF THE REFORM
SCHOOL, FROM MOUNT PLEASANT,

WITH VIEW TO PERMANENT LOCATION ELSEWHERE.

[PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.]

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REPORT.

TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

The undersigned committee, appointed to visit Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, the present location of the Girls' Department of the Reform School, and also the Mitchell Seminary, located at Mitchellville, Polk county, Iowa, to inquire into and report upon the adaptability of each, and their comparative adaptability and fitness, with view to the permanent location and establishment of said school at either of these places.

Your committee beg leave to report that they have visited the above named places, and find the said school now temporarily located on a farm of forty-three acres, about one mile southwest from the city of Mount Pleasant.

The land is mostly under cultivation excepting a few acres of woodland. There is an orchard of one hundred and fifty trees. All inclosed with a good fence.

The buildings upon the premises consist of a dwelling house, built about fifteen years ago, occupied by the Superintendent and family, and one or more teachers. The structure is of brick, two stories high, on a good site, fronts toward the east.

It is built of brick, with shingle roof. In size it is thirty feet in width and runs back at that width thirty-six feet, then projects six feet then runs back eighteen feet, then falls off from the south ten feet, then runs back twenty-six feet, making the total depth of seventy-two feet. The cellar extends under the entire house. The construction of the building is plain, and apparently substantial. The ceilings are low; the inside finish is good. There is no attempt at architectural display inside or out.

The rear part of first floor is occupied as dining-room for the inmates, and the second floor is used as a work-room. All the house in front of that is occupied by the Superintendent and family, with one

or more teachers, and consists of family dining-room, office with bed-room and closets, sitting-room and parlor. The second floor front is divided into several rooms, one occupied by a few of the youngest inmates for a bed-room.

Attached to the rear of this dwelling has been built a cheap two-story brick structure, with shingle roof, thirty by forty feet, with a cellar underneath, mostly used for a laundry. This building is used for a school-room on first floor, and the second floor for a dormitory, in which are crowded in one room about fifty-five inmates. The ceiling of this room is only $8\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, and the size 27x37 feet inside, allowing for each inmate a space wholly inadequate, having in view proper sanitary requirements.

The State furnished in the construction of this building \$1,000, the balance being donated by the citizens of Mt. Pleasant. The whole cost being \$1,300. The location of the building is such that drainage can be obtained in two directions. The barn upon the premises is sufficient for present needs. The whole property is offered to the State for \$9,000.

Your committee also visited Mitchell Seminary, at Mitchellville, in accordance with the instructions of the General Assembly. The building is situated upon a high and commanding site, and in style and appearance will always be attractive and creditable as a public institution. The ground is easily drained in several directions.

In the opinion of your committee the building is well adapted and suitable for the purposes of this Reform School, and will be ample in size for several years.

It was completed in the year 1874, and an expenditure of \$500 will repaint it inside and out, and repair all the effects of time and use. The rooms are spacious, high and amply ventilated. The first floor contains a dining-room about 20x50, kitchen, two store-rooms, wash-room, furnace-room, one sitting-room, three sleeping-rooms and a spacious vestibule and hall-way. The second floor contains a chapel 30x50, three recitation-rooms 18x21, one room 21x24, porch and hall-way. The third floor contains fourteen rooms, the largest being 18x21, and all the others being large enough to contain three beds each, without detriment to the health of the inmates, being thirteen feet high, and ventilated by transoms opening into a spacious hall which has a large ventilating shaft.

The building would accommodate one hundred girls, with all the necessary sleeping rooms, work-room, chapel, school-rooms and dining-

room. The building contains ample school furniture for a school of seventy-five pupils, and kitchen, dining-room and bed-room furniture designed and used for about thirty inmates, all of which is offered for sale with the building and grounds. The water supply is said to be ample for present use, being obtained from a depth of about one hundred feet, the water from which depth rises to within fifteen feet of the surface and is soft.

The seminary property includes the building, furniture and twenty acres of ground. To this is added a donation of twenty acres adjoining on the south, making a square farm of forty acres of the best prairie land. The plat is fenced on three sides, and contains a fair start of trees and evergreens for ornamentation.

The whole property is offered to the State for the sum of \$20,000, which may be paid in cash in whole or in part, or the whole amount may be paid in warrants bearing six per cent interest and payable in two or four years.

Your committee beg leave to submit a report from R. S. Finkbine, who visited the property at their request.

In view of the foregoing statement, the majority of your committee would report that in their opinion the Mitchellville property is preferable as a permanent location for the Girls' Reform School, as between the two places named, if it is decided to permanently locate at the present time.

R. D. STEPHENS,
J. M. PARKER,
J. M. ROBB,

On part of the House.

R. W. TIRRILL,
On part of the Senate.

REPORT OF ARCHITECT.

Messrs. Tirrill, Boling, Stephens, Parker and Robb—Gentlemen:

I, at your request, have examined the "Mitchellville Seminary building." I did not measure the size, as I find it laid down in a printed circular as being 50x83 feet and three stories in height; the basement story is 9 feet in the clear, the first story 14 feet and 6 inches and the second 13 feet. The foundations and basement walls are of rubble masonry, the corners, angles and buttresses are of cut stone with "pitched" face. The balance of the exterior walls are of brick, all

the interior walls that are constructed, that is that carry floors, are of brick. The cornice is of wood, the roof covering of common iron, painted. There is a tower one story above the cornice line of brick, and one above this, a "Mansard," covered with shingles, and painted in imitation of slate. The plastering is partly three-coat work and part two-coat, left under the float to be either tinted or finished with a white coat. The stair hall is wainscoted in two stories. The windows all have box frames and are hung. The doors are one and three-fourth inches thick, well made and have transoms over them.

The stone and brick work are strong, but roughly done. There are three cracks in the exterior brick walls, extending from the basement window-caps to the sills of the first story windows; these are caused by bad work in the segment caps of the basement windows, allowing a slight settlement. This can be remedied at a slight cost. The chimney-tops are capped with stone; these need resetting and fastening. The floors are good. The plastering is generally good; needing a few repairs. Most of the interior wood-work, indeed, all of the exterior wood and the roof need repainting. There are two hot-air furnaces in the building, but are not now in use, though apparently in good condition. In round numbers, I think five hundred dollars will put the building in good repair.

Respectfully submitted,

R. S. FINKBINE.

WHEREAS, A bill has been reported favorably by the Committee on Reform School, providing for the re-location of the Girls' Department of that School; and

WHEREAS, The Committee on Appropriations has received a proposition from the Trustees of Mitchell Seminary, located at Mitchellville, proposing to sell the building and twenty acre lot of that institution, for the sum of \$20,000, payable in two and four years, the title to be perfected on receipt of warrants, bearing six per cent interest till paid; therefore,

Resolved, by the Senate, the House concurring, That a Special Committee, composed of two members from the Senate and three from the House, be appointed to visit said Mitchell Seminary, and report at the earliest practicable date, as to its adaptability for the uses of the Girls' Reform School.

Resolved, further, That said committee shall also visit the Girls' Reform School, where now located, and report at the earliest practicable date as to the adaptability of said premises for the uses of said school, and also report as to the comparative advantages or adaptabilities of the two localities for the uses and purposes of said school.

MINORITY REPORT.

Minority (report to be submitted with the majority report) of Joint Committee appointed to visit Mitchellville Seminary, Polk county, Iowa, also the "Girls' Department of the Reform School," now located at Mount Pleasant, Henry county, Iowa, and make report as to the adaptability of said places, and also the comparative advantages of said places for the use and purpose of a Girls' Reform School, beg leave to submit the following:

That I visited the Mitchellville Seminary as directed and find the following state of facts: The building is a good, substantial and well constructed edifice, about 80 feet by 50 feet from out to out in size, three stories high; one of the stories is partially a basement, but so nearly above ground as to make it answer the purpose of cellar, kitchen, dining-room, and also ample room for storing all needful supplies, fuel, etc., that would be required. The basement story is constructed of stone, the two upper stories are brick and the roof is iron painted. There is connected with the building twenty acres of land and an offer of twenty acres more, which would make forty acres in all.

There is no barn or other out-buildings of any kind. The drainage

is reasonably good. There is one well of water; said well is about 90 feet in depth, but was assured that the water supply would be ample, and was further assured that good water could be obtained at a depth of from 28 to 30 feet if a greater supply should be needed. The building will have to be remodeled on the inside to a considerable extent to better adapt it for the use of said School, but to what extent and how much it will cost, am unable to say.

The cost of the property, including forty acres of land, will be twenty thousand dollars; add to this the amount necessary to make the repairs on the building, put up barn, hog pens, and other out-buildings, some approximate idea can be formed what it will cost.

The cost of the out-buildings will depend materially on the character or kind of buildings put up, so that it is impossible to say just what the entire cost will be.

The building stands out in an open prairie place adjoining the town of Mitchellville, has but few or no shade trees, with the exception of some evergreens in the front part of the lot.

As directed by the joint resolution your committee visited the Girls' Department of the Reform School where now located. The location is good, occupying an elevated position, surrounded by forest trees that screen it from public view and aid much in giving it a home-like appearance. The land where the buildings are located is sufficiently rolling to afford almost natural drainage. There is connected with the buildings forty-three acres of land in a good state of cultivation, good fences, 150 good bearing fruit trees, with a variety of the smaller fruits, such as grapes, raspberries, etc., etc.

The extreme length of the building is 72 feet, by 30 feet in width, with a basement story that is now used for cellar and kitchen combined, with two stories above the basement, constructed of brick with shingle roof.

The water supply is abundant—there is one stock well at the barn, two house wells and one cistern, which furnishes all the water that will be needed for a long time to come, an important consideration wherever the school may be located. The buildings are reasonably well adapted for the use of the school, though at the present time is somewhat crowded, or more so than it should be. The present owner of the property where the school is now located, proposes to sell the buildings, including the forty-three acres of land connected with them, for the sum of nine thousand dollars, a copy of which proposal is herewith attached and marked exhibit "A," and made a part of this

report. In addition to the nine thousand dollars for the purchasing of said property, it will require the sum of four thousand five hundred dollars to construct an additional building, which in the opinion of the Superintendent would afford room sufficient for many years to come. This would make the total cost of the property the sum of thirteen thousand five hundred dollars.

To summarize, and sum up as to the advantages of the two places as required by the resolution, I am clearly of the opinion, that it would be in the interest of economy to permanently locate the Girls' Department of the Reform School at the place where it now is.

The difference in the cost of the two properties is almost one-half as will be observed by the foregoing statement; and if the same amount of money should be expended at the location where the School now is that is proposed to pay for the "Mitchellville Seminary," a property could be had that would be greatly superior and much better adapted for the purposes and uses of a Girls' Reform School.

But should no greater expenditure be made for the present location than the thirteen thousand five hundred dollars, it will then and in that case, make a property that will be better adapted for the use contemplated than the "Mitchellville Seminary," in my opinion.

S. M. BOLING,

Committee on the part of the Senate.

COPY OF WHITING'S PROPOSITION.

EXHIBIT A.

MT. PLEASANT, IOWA, March 15, 1880.

I hereby offer to sell to the State of Iowa the buildings and grounds near Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, now occupied by the Girls' Department of the Reform School, on the following terms, viz: Nine thousand dollars, to be paid as follows: one-half in two years and the remaining one-half in four years from date of transfer, with six per cent annual interest from time of such transfer, the title to be perfect, and I to furnish an abstract of same within twenty days from receiving notice that it is desired; the deed to be a full warranty deed, and to convey a good title free of incumbrance; the grounds containing about forty-three acres, and to include all buildings and improvements on same belonging to me.

T. WHITING.